

Middleborough Antiquarian

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MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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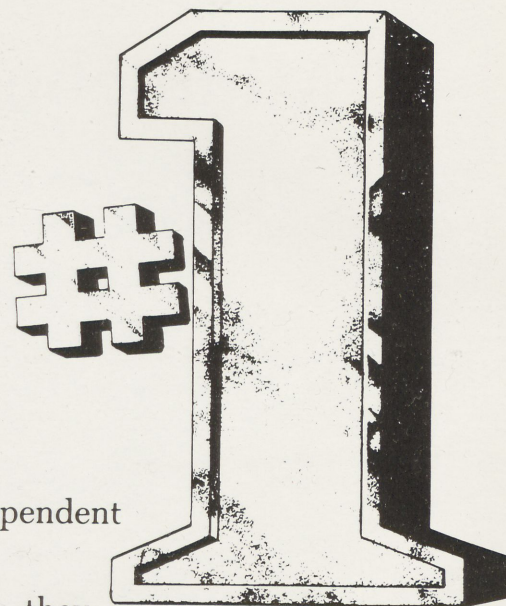
SPRING 1991

NUMBER 1



THE MIDDLEBOROUGH Historical Museum's extensive collection of memorabilia associated with General and Mrs. Tom Thumb includes a parasol, gloves, shoe and footstool belonging to Lavinia Warren, the Middleboro native who became a worldwide celebrity and the wife of Tom Thumb. The museum will be celebrating Lavinia's 150th birthday this year.

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A message from the editor

by Jane Lopes

This season promises to be an exciting one for the Middleborough Historical Museum — and the excitement will begin even before the museum opens for the summer.

As always, the museum buildings will reopen for the summer months on the day after the Fourth of July, this year a Friday. The museum will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday during July and August, and for the first two weekends in September. The weekend opening was an experiment that worked very well last year; a number of visitors commented that they had tried to visit the museum before but were prevented from doing so by the "weekdays only" hours.

Having the museum open on weekdays enhances opportunities for visitors to see our collections, and thus increases the museum's income, but the additional hours place a burden on curator-director Marsha Manchester and the museum committee. Volunteers are needed to relieve Marsha and her "regulars" and to ensure that all the museum buildings can be open to the public during museum hours. Those who volunteer find that they gain as much from the experience as does the museum; the rewards include an afternoon spent with people who also



LAVINIA WARREN, better known as Mrs. Tom Thumb, was born 150 years ago in North Middleboro. The Historical Association is observing that milestone this summer.

appreciate the past, and a chance to take a closer look at the museum collections.

In addition to another eventful museum season, the association is looking forward to two special celebrations this year — the Founders Day celebration to take place on the museum grounds on June 1, and the year-long celebration of the 150th anniversary of Lavinia Warren's birth. Lavinia, also known as Mrs. Tom Thumb, was, of course, the diminutive lady who was born in Middleboro and grew up to travel with P. T. Barnum's circus.

Lavinia's birthday will be celebrated with a special cake during Founders Day, which promises to be an event-filled day that local residents will remember for some time to come.

In addition to commemorating the birthday of one of Middleboro's most famous natives, Founders Day will recognize the efforts of those, from Middleboro's first residents the Wampanoag to today's inhabitants, who have made our community a special place in which to live.

The town's history will be celebrated with demonstrations of traditional crafts, tours of the museum and the town's historic sites, children's activities with historical themes and the dedication of the future home of the Robbins Museum of Archaeology, the Middleborough Historical Museum's new Jackson Street "neighbor." The highlight of the day will be a parade featuring nine Gettysburg Peace Flags and culminating with the unfurling of the Mt. Rushmore flag, a huge 45 by 90 foot flag made for the anniversary of the Mt. Rushmore sculpture of President Lincoln. The flag is housed here in Plymouth County and is being flown in Middleboro for the first time, although it was once displayed during a Flag Day ceremony at the junior high school.

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MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN

Middleboro, Mass.

VOLUME XXIX SPRING 1991 NUMBER 1

Jane C. Lopes Editor

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A message from . . .

A tentative Founders' Day schedule of events is published in this issue of the *Antiquarian*. Anyone interested in helping with the celebration is encouraged to contact Jane Lopes, chairman, or a member of the museum committee.

It is fitting that Lavinia's birthday should be observed during an event that might aptly be referred to as a "three-ring circus" judging by the number of events that will be occurring at once. Born in the morning of All Hallow's Eve, Oct. 31, 1841, tiny Mercy Lavinia Warren Bump, who never grew taller than a yardstick, was destined to become world famous as a performer.

As one to P. T. Barnum's proteges, Lavinia met and married Tom Thumb, and the two "little people" became the toast of Europe and the United States, once appearing before the royal family at Buckingham Palace. The couple retired to Middleboro, building a home on Plymouth Street across from Lavinia's birthplace. Both homes are still standing, as is the building operated as Primo's Pastime by Lavinia and her second husband Count Primo Magri.

A number of the general and Lavinia's possessions can be seen at the historical museum, including the items pictured on the cover of this issue of the *Antiquarian*. The famous couple's possessions are also scattered throughout the country, as evidenced by an article on a Texas museum written by Association president Robert Beals elsewhere in this issue.

Anyone who visits the museum this summer will have the double pleasure of helping to observe Lavinia's birthday and helping the Association to preserve its collection of "Middleboro memories."

TENTATIVE FOUNDERS DAY SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 1, 1991 (Rain or Shine)

| TIME | ACTIVITY |
|---------------|--|
| 8:30 am | Set-up time for crafters and exhibitors at Middleborough Historical Museum |
| 9:00 | Middleborough Historical Association Plant Sale begins. Craft booths open between 9 and 10 am. |
| 10:00 | Opening Ceremony |
| 10:00-4:00 pm | Crafts demonstrations, exhibits, historical museum tours, food sales. |
| 10:00-1:00 pm | Walking tours, children's activities at both museums including story telling, costume contest, coloring contest, and judging of pie contest. |
| 1:00 pm | Dedication of Read Building, the new home of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society and Robbins Archaeological Museum; ribbon cutting. |
| 1:00 | Parade begins to form at Burkland School |
| 1:45 | Parade steps off, proceeding to playground via Jackson St., Parade includes the National Guard Ceremonial Unit, Gettysburg Peace flags carried by representatives of local groups; bands and color guards. |
| 2:00 | Mt. Rushmore Flag Ceremony begins, lasting about 45 minutes. The flag will then fly until 4:00 pm. Ceremony will include speeches by local dignitaries. |
| 4:00 | Official end of day's activities. |

Preserving Middleboro's Past

by Jane Lopes

It is not necessary to leave downtown Middleboro to find examples of buildings that have been saved from demolition and "recycled," nor is it necessary to travel far from the Four Corners to see examples of opportunities lost.

The old Peirce grocery store on North Main Street, shown in the photograph accompanying this article, was for many years the Fourth District Court building, and today it houses the Middleboro Police Station. The handsome, imposing building is related both architecturally and historically to the unusual building across the street that was the Peirce family homestead and is now occupied by attorney George Decas and his staff.

On South Main Street, across from the Town Hall, is the administration building of the Middleboro Gas and Electric Department. Built prior to 1855 by Philander Washburn, the building has been decorated in period wallpaper and trim to retain its "personality" but is otherwise a functional office building.

Unfortunately for the present generation, at the same time one looks for examples of preservation, one can find all too many former sites of significant buildings in the downtown area, including the sites of the Peirce Academy, the Martinque and the Nemasket House. While many of the historic buildings that give Middleboro its unique New England flavor are still standing and in use today, many more have been lost forever, perhaps in some cases out of ignorance or lack of alternatives.

At the annual town meeting on June 17, the Middleboro Historical Commission will ask voters to approve a demolition delay bylaw, a preservation tool that will allow the commission to review all demolition permit applications and meet with owners and developers of property to explore alternatives to demolition for significant structures. By the standards outlined in the bylaw, a significant structure is one that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, one that has been nominated to the register, one that is listed on the town's historic

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Bay State No. One — Middleboro's First Fire Pumper

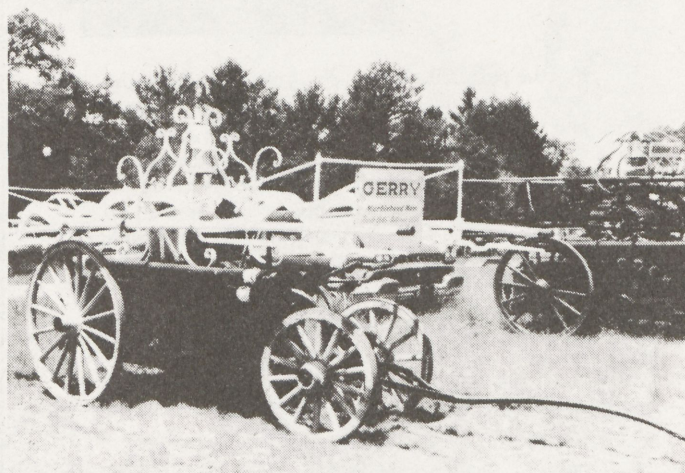
by Robert M. Beals

In Volume XXIV, No. 4 (March 1986), I began a two-part history of the Middleboro Fire Department. I mentioned that the first apparatus consisted of a hand-tub under the name of "Bay State No. 1," and a hook and ladder truck, both hand-drawn. I had no idea who the manufacturers might be of either one, and even thought they could be one-off products of local artisans.

Recently, while trying to find information on another hand-tub, I consulted the book, "Hundreds of Hunnemans," by Ward R. Tufts. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Tufts several years ago when we were both visiting the New England Fire and History Museum in Brewster on Cape Cod. His book is the result of several years of research into the history of every Hunneman pumper that was built — a total of 745 hand pumpers and steamers, between 1792 and 1881. Bay State #1 was delivered to Middleboro on March 22, 1852, and was the 447th built by the Hunneman Co.

The story of William C. Hunneman is a fascinating one. He was born in Boston in 1769. As a young man, he learned to be a coppersmith as an apprentice to Paul Revere. Once this training period was over, Mr. Hunneman went to work with Mr. Martin Gay, a brass founder, at 20 Union Street in Boston. In fact, he had a room at this address that he rented for a modest price, plus attending to the fires and cleaning. Hunneman's association with Mr. Gay was short-lived, however, as the latter, a Tory, was banished to England. Hunneman continued in business in the manufacture of warming pans, pots, kettles, irons, etc. As the 1700s came to a close, and on the heels of several major fires, Hunneman decided to make his contribution to the solution of the fire problem by building fire engines.

Toward this endeavor, he arranged to purchase a patent for a hand-pumper from Mr. Jacob Perkins of Boston. One Ephraim Thayer (1794-1811) of Boston was also building fire engines, and the Thayer engine and Hunneman engine were quite similar in design. The only difference was in the angle upon which the piston operated. The Thayer engine had its piston set to operate in a vertical manner, that is, straight up and down, while the Hunneman patent called for the piston action to operate at a thirty-degree angle. The name "hand-tub" derives its origin from the fact that the body is, actually, a tub designed to hold water. Formed from sheets of copper, such as those turned out by Paul Revere, to sheathe the bottoms of ships, the fire engine was a square or oblong box, lined with these sheets of copper to seal in the water, and a pump to force the water



THE HUNNEMAN hand-pumper, pictured here, is similar to Bay State No. 1, the first firefighting apparatus owned by the Middleboro Fire Department.

out. The piston diameter of the Middleboro pumper was 5-1/2 inches.

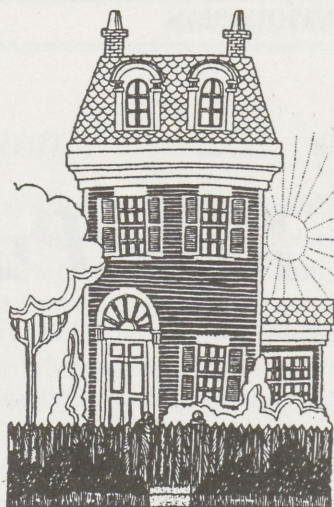
These rigs were sold all over the United States and Canada, and a small number even found their way to Puerto Rico and Chile. Fire departments liked them because they were light in weight and only required a small crew to operate. The chassis has a goose-neck design which made them easy to steer.

Even today, after all these years, there are still many Hunneman hand-pumpers in existence. They can be seen in parades and musters around the country. The "Ousamequin," built in 1850 is on display at Bridgewater's Central Fire Station. There are two at the New England Fire and History Museum in Brewster. During a trip to the state of Washington a few years ago, I photographed the 1850 "Sacramento" in a museum in Seattle. It was delivered to that city in 1854.

In 1862, the company began to build steam fire engines. Most of these were sold to Boston, Brighton, Dorchester, East Boston, and the Charlestown, who had their own Fire Departments in those days. The last steamer was delivered to Richibucto, New Brunswick.

William C. Hunneman passed away in April of 1846, but the company remained in the family until its closing in 1881.

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from
home



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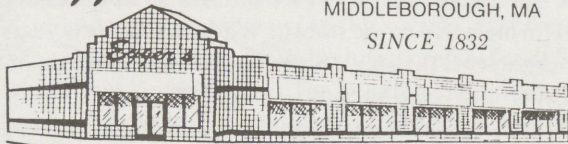
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PATRICK LEROY, a member of Boy Scout Troop 10, earned his Eagle Scout badge by refurbishing the South Middleboro United Church Cemetery last summer and redrawing the cemetery's plot plan. (Photo by Jane Lopes)

Scout project benefits cemetery

by Patrick A. Leroy

Patrick Leroy, a member of Boy Scout Troop 10 of the Central United Methodist Church, recently completed an Eagle Scout project that involved cleanup, restoration and redrawing of the plot plan for the South Middleboro United Methodist Church Cemetery.

According to Mertie Romaine's history of the town, the land for the South Middleboro cemetery was given to the community by Consider Benson in 1768. In the beginning, each family could mark off as much space as needed. In 1929, the Cemetery Association voted to sell no more lots in the original cemetery, but in 1946 the association accepted a gift of land from Mrs. Harold Williams in memory of her grandfather, Ephraim A. Hunt; thus 117 plots were added to the cemetery. A receiving tomb was built in 1924.

I began my project on Saturday, May 19, 1990. I worked on it weekends and weekdays throughout summer vacation finally finishing the restoration part of the project on Saturday, September 29. I had a total of 6 work parties with a total of

25 hours spent working. A total of 29 people contributed to the completion of my project: 14 scouts (including myself), 5 nonscouting youth (from my youth group), 5 adult scouters, 4 adult nonscouters, and my sister. Over the course of the next three weeks I gathered all of the necessary notes and diagrams for the re-drawing of the plot plan. I spent approximately 12-15 hours total on this part of the project. My sister helped me to take notes and measurements at the cemetery, and I used them to re-draw the plot plan.

My Eagle Scout Service Project was to be carried out in two phases. The first phase can be described very simply as a cemetery clean up and restoration. The second phase consisted of the verification and revision of the plot plan of the cemetery.

This cemetery is already well maintained and well kept up. The clean up will consist of the following: several headstones which have become grown in will be cleaned out, and along the edges of the cemetery any old flower pots, coffee cans or

(Continued on Page Fifteen)

Setting the stage for conflict

by Jack Coleman

Few people realize that the bloodiest war on the North American continent, in per capita terms, was fought in this area and was precipitated by a specific event in present-day Lakeville. The conflict is remembered as King Philip's War, a savage exchange that lasted nearly a year and a half and caused widespread misery and destruction.

Fully six hundred of the early English settlers lost their lives, a number that might sound mild in the context of the carnage of the 20th century, but one that translates into one on every ten able-bodied males at the time. More than ten times as many Indians were killed, losses that further decimated a native population already ravaged by disease.

During King Philip's War, sixteen English settlements, including Middleboro, were completely destroyed, and many others repeatedly attacked by native forces. The precarious economy was shattered. Trade between English settlers at Plymouth, neutral Indian tribes, and other nations' colonial outposts ground to a standstill. Historian Douglas Leach estimated that fully 20 years would pass, before the extent of colonial settlement reached the pre-war stage.

What was the cause of such a destructive conflict and how did it affect early Middleboro? Many claim that warfare between the early settlers and native population was inevitable, given the rapid encroachment of Indian lands by the new arrivals, as well as some particularly heavy-handed legal practices on the part of the English.

The fact is, however, that there had been a three-decade long period of peace and prosperity between the Indians and English before the relationship began to strain in the early 1670s. The two groups were interdependent — the Pilgrims had needed the good grace of the Indians for their very survival after arriving in 1620. So many of their numbers perished the first winter alone — more than half — that the deceased were buried in unmarked graves for fear of alerting the warily-regarded natives to their predicament.

The cautionary practice turned out to be unnecessary. Massasoit, the benevolent sachem (chief) of the Wampanoag, extended help to the Pilgrims and along with others, such as the well-known Squanto, taught the early settlers vital survival skills.

As the years passed and the Pilgrims' numbers grew, their strength and adaptability to Massachusetts improved. Trade developed between the Indians and settlers. Although the Indians enjoyed a clear advantage in numbers in 1620, the settlers slowly began to reverse the situation, through immigration and superior weaponry. Massasoit helped expedite this development by ceding tracts of land to the English, although some historians now believe that the relinquished areas that were largely uninhabited. In the process, he protected his

western borders, by virtue of the English presence in the ceded territories, from his major native foe, the Narragansett tribe.

After Massasoit died in 1661 at the venerable age of 81, he was succeeded by his oldest son Alexander (Wamsutta). Alexander's reign was brief and uneventful. About the only thing remembered about Wamsutta is the mysterious nature of his death, and the fact that he preceded Philip (Metacomet) as sachem.

After being summoned to appear before the English at Plymouth, a subservient practice that later infuriated Philip, Alexander fell deathly ill. His fellow Wampanoag strongly suspected that their sachem had been poisoned, although there has never been any evidence of this. Whatever the cause, Alexander died on the shores of Monponsett in present-day Halifax while attempting to return to his native Mount Hope. His suspicious demise strained relations between natives and English settlers.

Alexander was succeeded by Philip in 1662. Over the three centuries since the war that would bear his name was fought, Philip has been described in a number of ways — as "ruthless and sentimental, wily and indecisive, noble and niggardly," in the words of one contemporary historian. On the whole, the impression of him that has been passed down to us is a negative one.

In fact, there is little solid knowledge of the type of man and sachem Philip really was. Nanepashemet, a research associate at Plimouth Plantation and the manager of the Wampanoag Indian Program, points out that the negative characteristics attributed to Philip clearly reflect a Puritanical bias, part of what he claims is the perpetuation of the myth that the war was "righteous and justified in the Puritans' eyes."

One thing we do know for certain about Philip — in the years following his accession to power, he came to bitterly resent the increasing English domination in the region. Initially, Philip had been cooperative with authorities at Plymouth, as in 1662 when he renewed a pact signed years earlier by his father.

But by 1677, rumors had begun to spread, supposedly from the mouths of the Narragansetts, that the Wampanoag sachem was planning action against the English. Philip was summoned three times to answer the charges, appearing twice in Plymouth and the last time in Taunton. He did so in deference to their acknowledged authority, a position backed by greater numbers and weaponry.

During each appearance, Philip assured the officers of the General Court that the rumors were unfounded. Enough doubt remained for Philip to be fined, and after 1671 he was forced to pay an annual tribute to the English in the form of five wolves' heads. The English also demanded that the Wampanoag surrender any and all of their firearms, and Philip relinquished a total of seventy-five muskets.



ALDEN BLAKE, SACHEM OF THE ASSONET band of the Wampanoag, walks across King Philip's Lookout in Lakeville, from where the alleged murder of John Sassamon was witnessed by John Patuckson in 1675. The trial following Sassamon's death helped push colonial settlers and Native Americans to the brink of King Philip's War. (Photo by Jack Coleman)

It is important to remember, as Nanepashemet points out, that Philip was regarded as a king by the Wampanoag. It infuriated him that he was forced to humble himself before a mere governor, one in fact subservient to another king, Charles II. After his last appearance, he is said to have left Taunton in a blinding rage, intent upon preventing further personal and tribal humiliations. But while the English had angered Philip to the point of provocation, he was in no position to take them on. Estimates of the population of white settlements in New England in 1670 run from 36,000 to 45,000, and the number was growing rapidly. The native peoples numbers less than half of that, their ranks having earlier been decimated by virulent European microbes against which they had no defense.

There was also the vast difference in the use of technology between the two peoples. When the Pilgrims landed fifty years earlier, the native people they encountered had never seen firearms, looms, or the wheel. As surprising as it sounds, the domestication of animals was also unknown to them. The trade that grew over the years helped close the gap, but the white settlers never lost their clear technological advantage.

The Indians, however, possessed centuries-old knowledge of New England's rough-hewn topography and harsh climate, as well as the use of an extensive trail network that extended hundreds of miles. Not being able to compete with the English in manpower and technology, they would come to rely on stealth

and guerilla warfare. It is a scenario strongly reminiscent of later American involvement in Vietnam.

In January, 1675, as relations between native Americans and English settlers continued to deteriorate, the body of John Sassamon, Philip's former personal secretary, was discovered beneath the frozen surface of Assawompsett Pond. Sassamon had once transcribed Philip's will for the illiterate sachem and was said to have made himself the main benefactor. After breaking from Philip, it was rumored that Sassamon had warned authorities in Plymouth that the Wampanoag sachem was planning for war.

After the discovery of Sassamon's body, a native by the name of Patuckson claimed to have witnessed his murder at the hand of Philip's braves. In June, three Wampanoag, including another close associate of Philip's and Patuckson's son, were put on trial in Plymouth for Sassamon's murder. Two were found guilty and sentenced to hang. The third Wampanoag, Tobias, was bailed out by Tispaquin, the Assawompsett sachem and most powerful chieftain of Philip's, for one hundred pounds, with security on land in present-day Middleboro. But after the start of hostilities later that month, Tobias was also executed.

There remains, however, no firm evidence that Sassamon was murdered by Philip's followers. A more likely scenario is that he simply fell through the ice of Assawompsett Pond and

(Continued on Next Page)

As colonial forces organized and gained strength, Philip abandoned the Mount Hope peninsula and fled westward with his braves. The nearby Narragansett consented to care for the Wampanoag women and children during the trek, an agreement that would later help draw the tribe into the fray.

was drowned. Taken in this light, the Wampanoag reaction to the trial and executions was understandably severe. But according to Nanepashemet, Philip did not then order attacks, as is commonly believed, but put his people into a "defensive posture." Nanepashemet believes that the English interpreted Philip's moves as offensive preparations, and were unnerved. Further actions on both sides began to assume a momentum of their own.

The war itself broke out in Swansea, Rhode Island, a small settlement at the mouth of the Mount Hope peninsula, not far from the seat of Philip's power in the town of Sowans. On Sunday, June 20, while Swansea residents were in meeting, Wampanoag braves killed several of their cattle. The townspeople cautiously gathered in the garrison house while the Indians ransacked Swansea homes. After three days, a teenage boy ventured out and shot one of the marauders. Shortly after, the Wampanoag retaliated by killing the youth and his father. Later that same week, a Middleboro resident, Gershom Cobb, was numbered among the first victims of the war to fall at Swansea.

The news of the hostilities spread rapidly. Armed contingents were dispatched to Mount Hope from Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colony. In Middleboro, the townspeople took to seeking shelter in the fort, near the present location of the Grange hall on North Main Street. The fort was capable of holding all of the tiny settlement's seventy-five inhabitants.

After the outbreak of fighting in Swansea, an Indian whose name is lost to history took to insulting the occupants of the fort with inflammatory words and gestures from atop a rock across the Nemasket River. During a council between the town's elders, it was deemed necessary to shoot the Indian. As de-

scribed in Thomas Weston's "History of the Town of Middleboro, Volume I," Isaac Howland was chosen to attempt the shot on the basis of his skill with a musket. Howland was the son of John and Elizabeth Howland, who were both passengers on the Mayflower. Among his sister Ruth's direct descendants is Robert Beals, who is the president of the Middleborough Historical Association.

According to Mr. Beals, Howland shot and mortally wounded the Indian in one attempt, "the first and only instance that the weapon has ever been fired." He said the musket, a long gun measuring over seven feet in length that had to be placed over another man's shoulder to be steadied, hit the Indian from an estimated distance of 155 rods. Given that a rod is five and a half yards, this would mean a shot of almost nine hundred feet. Either Howland was very lucky, as weapons at that time werenotoriously inaccurate, or the distance was exaggerated. Most likely it was a combination of both.

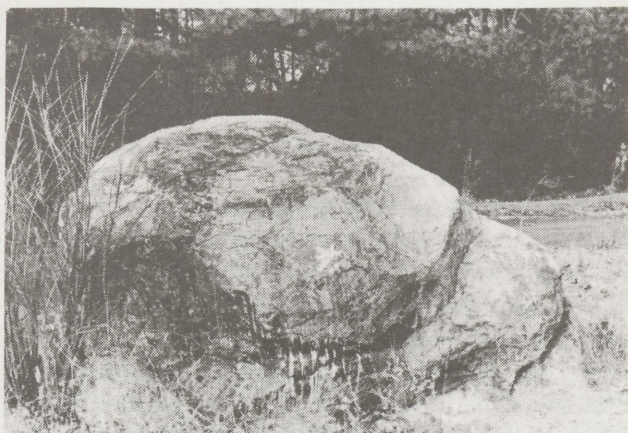
Legend has it that after being hit by Howland's shot, the dying Indian's handprint was permanently emblazoned on the rock he was standing upon. It is known to this day as, simply, "the hand rock." Nenepashemet claims that the markings on this and other rocks on the area were gradually chipped onto the stone. In fact, Weston's history described the marking as already there at the time of the incident.

In the conflict that followed, the tiny, fledgling community of Middleboro suffered extensive damage. Without sufficient provisions, Middleboro residents were forced to abandon the fort and seek shelter with many other settlers in the "Old Colony" of Plymouth. In July, 1675, Wampanoag warriors returned to Middleboro and, according to Weston's history, "all of the dwelling houses and outbuildings were destroyed."

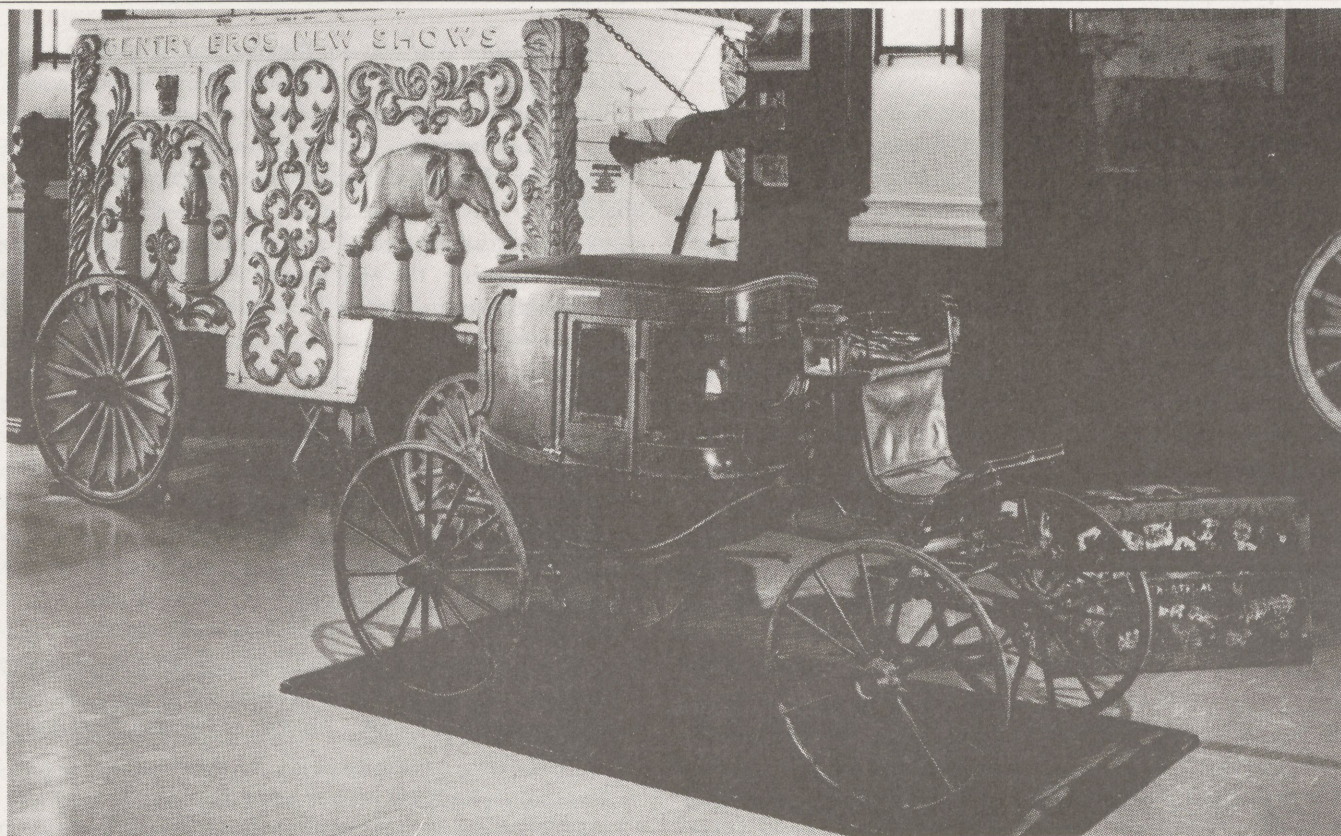
As colonial forces organized and gained strength, Philip abandoned the Mount Hope peninsula and fled westward with his braves. The nearby Narragansett consented to care for the Wampanoag women and children during the trek, an agreement that would later help draw the tribe into the fray. Colonial authorities in Boston and Plymouth were able to obtain an agreement that the Narragansett would remain neutral for at least three months. It was a pivotal move; the Narragansett tribe was by far the most powerful in southern New England, and their immediate alliance with Philip would undoubtedly have prolonged the war.

While on the run, the Wampanoag warriors, adept at hunting in the forest and living off the land, took to raiding English towns and outposts. Among their targets were Dartmouth, Taunton, Bridgewater and, as they swung further west, Weymouth, Marlborough, Sudbury and North Brookfield. Philip also used this period to attempt to persuade other Indian tribes to take up arms against the English settlers. Among those who agreed to join the fray were the Niptucks to the north of Massachusetts Bay colony, as well the Pocassetts to the east of Mount

(Continued on Page Twelve)



SHORTLY AFTER THE START OF KING PHILIP'S WAR, early Middleboro settler Isaac Howland shot and killed an Indian standing on top of this rock near the Nemasket River. According to legend, the dying man's handprint was emblazoned upon the rock, leading to its local designation, the "hand rock." (Photo by Jack Coloman)



THIS COACH is believed to have been built in 1843 for General Tom Thumb by P.T. Barnum. Now owned by the Hertzberg Circus Collection, it was once used by Mrs. Tom Thumb, Lavinia Warren, to get around Middleboro. (Post cards courtesy of the Hertzberg Circus Collection)

The Hertzberg Circus Collection

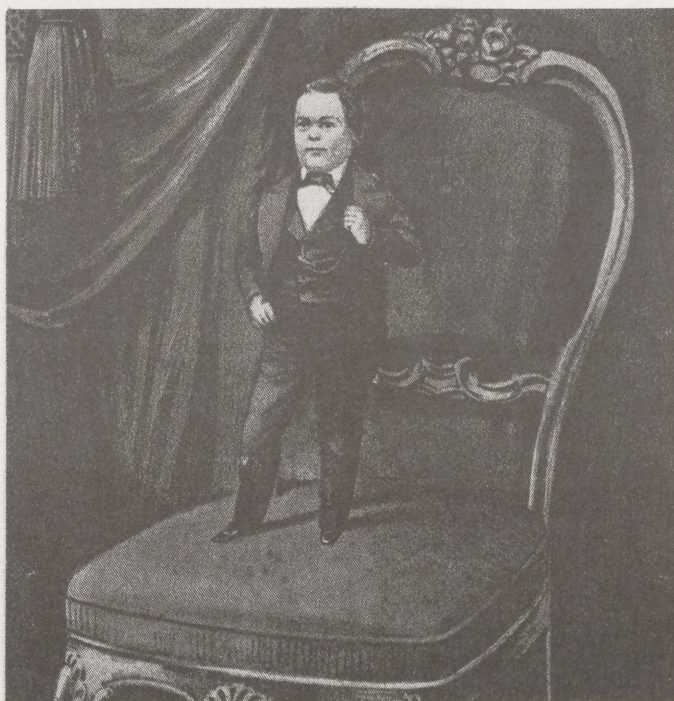
by Robert M. Beals

During the summer of 1990, a visitor came to the museum who told us about the Hertzberg Circus Collection at the public library in San Antonio, Texas.

After correspondence with the curator, we received an envelope containing an interesting letter, a brochure and several post cards of the circus collection. One of the post cards shows a small coach that was built in 1843 by P.T. Barnum for Tom Thumb when he was five years old. While several other Tom Thumb coaches are in existence, none are as old. The coach, always pulled by small ponies, was later used by Mrs. Tom Thumb during her appearance after the death of her husband in 1883.

Harry Hertzberg was fascinated by the "little general" and acquired numerous other objects associated with the "little person." (For example: a piece of Gen. and Mrs. Tom Thumb's 1863 wedding cake, Tom's miniature violin used in his stage presentations, a tiny muzzle-loading rifle, a vest and cane, and a cast of Tom Thumb's foot.

Mr. Hertzberg also acquired numerous prints and music, as well as a poster advertising Gen. & Mrs. Tom Thumb with Barnum's circus of 1881, one of the few times they actually were part of a circus.



TOM THUMB, who at 22 years of age stood 33 inches tall, is pictured in a Currier and Ives lithograph from 1860. Tom Thumb memorabilia is included in the Hertzberg Circus Collection in San Antonio, Texas.

Setting the stage . . .

(Continued from Page Ten)

Hope. Eventually, the Narragansett were also drawn into the war, but only after being attacked by colonial forces wary of any ostensibly neutral native tribes. Attempts to enlist the Mohawk from the Albany, New York region was unsuccessful.

For over a year, the scales of war were evenly balanced. But the colonial superiority in manpower and arms was more than Philip and his allies could endure. After a particularly serious defeat at Scituate, Philip's forces were broken and dispirited. An offer of amnesty to Indians who surrendered their weapons was accepted by hundreds of Wampanoag facing almost certain death from attack, disease and starvation. The Wampanoag were unwilling to accept the staggering casualties that accompanied European-style warfare, losses they found horrendous. As was inevitable from the moment the first shot was fired, a desperate Philip fled to the swamp of his native Mount Hope in a futile attempt to elude his pursuers.

It was just a matter of time before the sachem was discovered and trapped. On August 12, 1676, during an early morning raid on his camp, Philip, was shot and killed by a "friendly" Indian named Alderman. In accordance with English practices in punishing traitors, Philip's body was quartered and severed parts hung from trees. One of his hands was taken by Alderman, who went on to earn a lifetime of tavern favors from its display. Philip's head was placed on a stake in Plymouth, where it remained for many years. Cotton Mather is said to have been particularly pleased with the gruesome sight, and more than once while visiting "took off the jaw of that blasphemous leviathan."

For the Wampanoag, defeat in the war meant an end to any serious possibility of preventing English encroachment into their territory and the gradual erosion of their culture. They found themselves squeezed between the inexorable pressure of new arrivals and remaining Indian foes to the west. Their lives shattered, thousands of the Indian survivors of the war, among them the remaining members of Philip's family, were sold into slavery in the West Indies.

Native Americans have not forgotten King Philip's War, nor the crucial assistance they had earlier extended to the Pilgrims and other English settlers. According to Nanepashemet, "the one thing Indians hate more than anything is ingratitude...by the 1670s, the tables had turned, and the English never reciprocated." Nanepashemet believes that the war helped "set in motion the complete subjugation of Native Americans," a process that has continued to the present day. He also thinks that Philip has been unfairly maligned historically, by bearing the brunt of responsibility for a conflict that could very well have been avoided.

But Nanepashemet appears to have few illusions about the history of the era. "Did the natives kill innocent people, and destroy their property?" he asks. "Yes, they did. Did they practice scalping and torture? Yes, they did all of this — and so did the English. It was a war, and nothing less, and those are some of the things that happened."

King Philip's War was not the first armed conflict between European settlers and Native Americans, and it would be followed by two centuries of bitter, intermittent struggle. But the die had been cast — never again would native peoples oppose the white man on anything resembling a level playing field.

An event that was partly-precipitated by seldom-remembered incidents in the Middleboro area helped established a dubious historical dynamic that endures to this day.

Isaac Howland 1649 — 1724

by Robert M. Beals

Isaac Howland was born in Plymouth on November 15, 1649, the youngest of the ten children of Pilgrim John and Elizabeth (Tilley) Howland. As a young man, he moved inland to Middleboro, a distance of about fifteen miles. He purchased land on which the present town hall stands, and was also involved in the Sixteen Shilling and Twenty-six Man's Purchases. He married Elizabeth, daughter of George Vaughn, of Marshfield, and they were the parents of eight children; Seth, born Nov. 28, 1677; Isaac, born March 6, 1678; Priscilla, born Aug. 22, 1681; Elizabeth, born Dec. 2, 1682; Nathan, born Jan. 17, 1686; Jael, born Oct. 13, 1688; Susanna, born Oct. 14, 1690; and Hannah, born Oct. 16, 1694.

Shortly after the beginning of King Phillip's War, the Middleboro settlers were advised to move to the village fort, on what is now North Main Street (approximate location of the present Nemasket Grange Hall). Isaac Howland and seven men were chosen as a council, with John Tomson as commander. Tomson then formed sixteen able-bodied men into a company to protect the people. In addition to the "ordinary guns," which each family owned, the company was equipped with a "long gun." It was seven feet, four and a half inches long; the length of the barrel, six and one-half feet; the size of the caliber twelve balls to the pound; and the length of the face of the lock, ten inches. The gun weighed twelve pounds.

In early June of 1675, a band of Indians was seen from the fort on the opposite bank of the Nemasket River, near "hand rock." It was called that because of what appeared to be the impression of a person's hand on it.

For several days, an Indian came to this location and offered insults in gestures and word to the garrison in the fort, hoping to provoke an attack. John Tomson called his council together, and after careful consideration, decided that they should shoot the Indian. The "long gun" was brought out, and Isaac Howland was selected for his skill as a marksman. He rested the gun on the shoulder of a comrade and fired. The Indian fell, mortally wounded. The shot was considered remarkable at the

Setting the stage . . .

time, as the distance was one hundred and fifty-five rods (or 2,557-1/2 feet), much beyond the range of an ordinary musket. The wounded man was carried away to the home of William Nelson, about three and half miles away, where he died. The house was then burned. Several houses and mills were also destroyed by the Indians.

On July 30, 1675, the authorities in Plymouth learned that a force of Indians was near the Middleboro-Bridgewater line. Captain Church, along with Isaac Howland, and other members of a company, went off in pursuit. They went to Bridgewater, where King Phillip, with some of his followers, desiring to escape, had cut down a tree to serve as a bridge across the Taunton River. Church, on reaching this temporary bridge, saw an Indian sitting nearby, and was about ready to fire, when one of his company, who thought it was a friendly Indian, restrained him. It turned out to be King Phillip. Captain Church and Isaac Howland pursued him into a swamp, where they captured several of Phillip's tribe — but not him. Back in Plymouth, Captain Church received the governor's thanks for this victory in which 173 Indians were killed. Again, Church

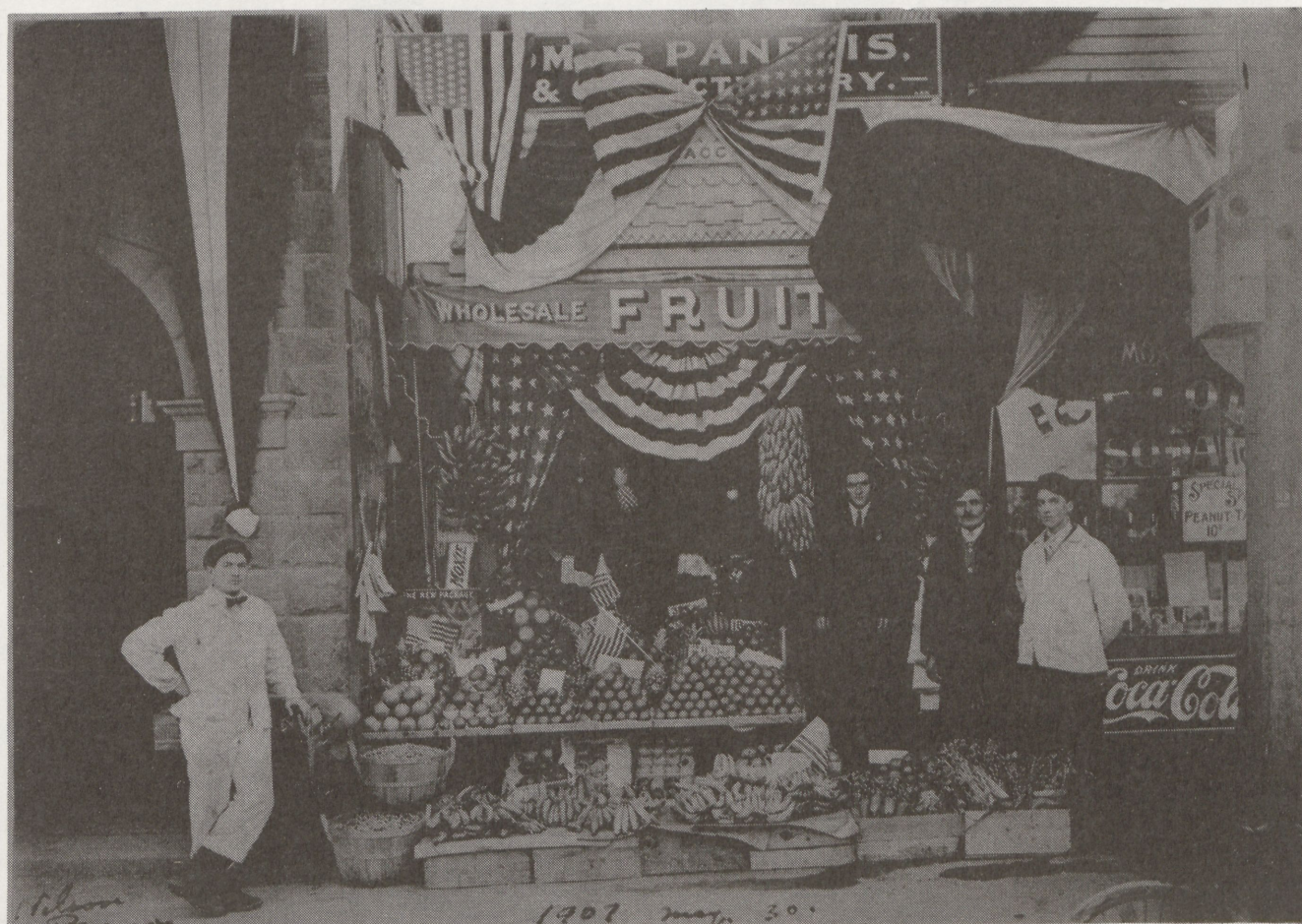
and Howland went in search to Phillip, and on Aug. 12th, surrounded and captured him at Mount Hope.

The war lasted about two years. Thirteen villages were destroyed and many others were attacked and seriously damaged. There were heavy losses of life to both the white people and the Indians.

Isaac Howland served in the town government of Middleboro for several years. In 1672, he was a surveyor of highways, and in 1674, the constable for the town. He is listed as having been a selectman in 1683, 1684, 1685, 1686, 1687, 1692, 1695, 1696, 1700, 1701, 1702 and 1703. Town meetings were frequently held in his home. He was also a representative from Middleboro to the General Court of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England from 1689 to 1691. He also owned a tavern for a number of years.

Isaac Howland died March 9, 1724, at the age of 74, and is buried at the Nemasket Hill Cemetery. His name is one of the most prominent in the early history of Middleboro.

Ref.: History of the Town of Middleborough, 1906.



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Scout project . . .

(Continued from Page Seven)

bottles will be collected and disposed of. Finally, any low hanging branches from trees will be removed.

The restoration will include: righting the headstones that are no longer standing straight up. Also the headstones that are normally level with the ground will be raised back up to the level of the ground. Finally several headstones will be repaired where possible.

The plot plan part of the project will consist of taking the current plans and checking them against what is actually in the cemetery. After having been verified, the plot plan will be redrawn (by me, with any necessary changes added) and presented to the church and to Middleboro Historical Commission.

This Project benefited the South Middleboro United Methodist Church Cemetery. It has benefited the church in the following ways: The headstones are now all vertical instead of tilted which makes it much more easy to mow around them. These stones are now much less prone to damage. The ground level stones are now all ground level again. The cemetery is much more pleasing to the eye now that the stones are all nice and straight instead of being crooked. And of course the church now has a new and much more accurate plot plan of the cemetery.

I have discussed these plans with both the minister of the church, Rev. Dr. Helen Oliver, and the head of the cemetery,

Vincent Gorman. Both have approved of the project and contributed to the planning of it.

The help from my project came mainly from scouts in my troop. I also had help from my youth group and from adult leaders.

Contributing to my project were: Diane White, Assistant Scoutmaster, and Stuart White, scoutmaster, who had the blueprints of the cemetery made up where they work; Vincent Gorman, head of the cemetery, showed me how to handle the stones and gave me copies of the original plot plan to work off of; Edie Mathews, one of the caretakers of the church, from whom I borrowed the key to the crypt in order to use the yard tools; and Lindsay Leroy, my sister, who helped me with measuring the cemetery plots.

One very fortunate thing about my project was that there was no cost and all of the necessary tools and equipment were supplied by the church and by my workers. I had access to shovels, rakes, a wheel barrow, a broom, and a heavy pry bar.

I began my project on May 19, 1990 in the Gammons plot directly behind the church. I had 5 scouts helping me that day and we started work right away. The first thing that we started on was cleaning out a bramble of wild roses that had completely grown in around two stones. The bramble was at least 10 feet in diameter and it took most of the afternoon to clean out.

We also worked in raising the ground level stones in that plot back to ground level. This was accomplished very simply by

(Continued on Next Page)

Middleborough Historical Museum



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Scout project . . .

digging the stones out and then reinstalling them at ground level. On this day I did not get as much accomplished as I had planned to, however, looking back at how many people I had and the amount of work there was I am satisfied on what we did accomplish.

I held my second work party the following day, May 20, 1990. On this day I had quite a few people come to work. I had 17 people helping me on that day including members of my youth group and several adult helpers.

On this day we were able to spread out and work in the area directly behind the church. I had people working on the ground level stones and on the regular headstones. The regular headstones were also quite easy to straighten. The stones were carefully removed and then reinstalled back in their original vertical position. Unfortunately we had to end early because of the weather. I was able to accomplish much more on this day than the previous and I was surprised that we did it in so little time.

On the remaining four work days everything went smoothly and according to plan. Because I had mostly the same core of boys helping me I had a definite advantage. After having worked on one day they knew exactly what I wanted and how they were to do it, so on subsequent days they were able to show up and go straight to work after I told them which section we would be working on.

My third work day was held on May 26, 1990. I had 6 people helping me on this day. We worked along the back section along the road. We mainly worked on raising the ground level stones back up to ground level.

On the fourth work day we did exactly the same as on the third except we moved toward the middle section of the cemetery. I held this work day on June 28 with 4 people helping. When we finished on this day I was finally more than half finished.

My fifth work day was held on August 26 with 5 people helping me. We continued working in the middle section and in the area behind the crypt. We also straightened a row of headstones that looked a lot like a row of crooked teeth.

My final work day was held on September 29 on this day I had 5 people helping me. We worked on the front section and finished up everything that needed doing. We straightened and raised the remaining stones and we cleaned out the low hanging branches in the maple trees that border one side of the cemetery.

Over the course of the next three weeks I gathered all of the necessary notes and diagrams for the redrawing of the plot plan. I spent approximately 12-15 hours total on this part of the project. I went to the cemetery and measured off the perimeter of the cemetery and how its boundary lines were oriented. Next, with the help of my sister, I took all of the measurements of the different plots and took notes on all the different locations of things. After each session of note taking I came home and drew a little of the plot plan each night until it was finished.

There were no real changes from the original proposal but

there were two minor omissions. The first omission was that we did not really need to clean anything up because the cemetery is already so well cared for. The second omission was that I decided not to have any of the stones repaired. This was because there were only two stones that really warranted repair. One of these stones was not so badly damaged that it needed serious repair and the other stone would have needed to be sent some-place that does monument restoration in order to make a new base.

In conclusion I can only say how pleased I am with how the whole project went. I found that working with small groups allowed me much better control and we were able to get a lot accomplished. I also must say that the people who helped me were all great to work with and a lot of help, although they did tend to get a little restless toward the end of my work parties, but there was a lot of work and that sort of thing is to be expected and there were no problems.

The only thing that I would change about my project is that I would have kept a better journal. I started out well but after awhile I stopped because it was rather repetitious because we did basically the same thing every day. I did, however, keep a precise record of the days of the work parties who attended and how long they worked.

Once again I can say how pleased I am with everyone who worked on it and how well it turned out. Surprisingly everything went according to plan, I had no difficulties. I had a lot of fun doing it and I think everyone who worked on it had fun too.



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THE PEIRCE STORE on North Main Street has also served as the Fourth District Court building and is now the town's police station, an example of a well-recycled building.

Preserving Middleboro's past . . .

(Continued from Page Four)

building inventory or one which, in the opinion of the commission, has significant architectural or historical value.

If a building is determined to be a significant structure, the commission has up to six months to work with the property owner to sell or move the building rather than raze it, to have the town purchase it, to find grant money for restoration, or some other alternative to demolition. At the end of six months, or sooner, if negotiations are unsuccessful, the owner may still tear down the building, but the town will at least have had an opportunity to try to save it.

Few hearings will be held under this bylaw, perhaps one of two a year. In most cases, it will be determined that buildings have deteriorated too far to be saved. But the bylaw would offer the community a degree of protection against a loss of the magnitude of the Peirce Academy or the Nemasket House.

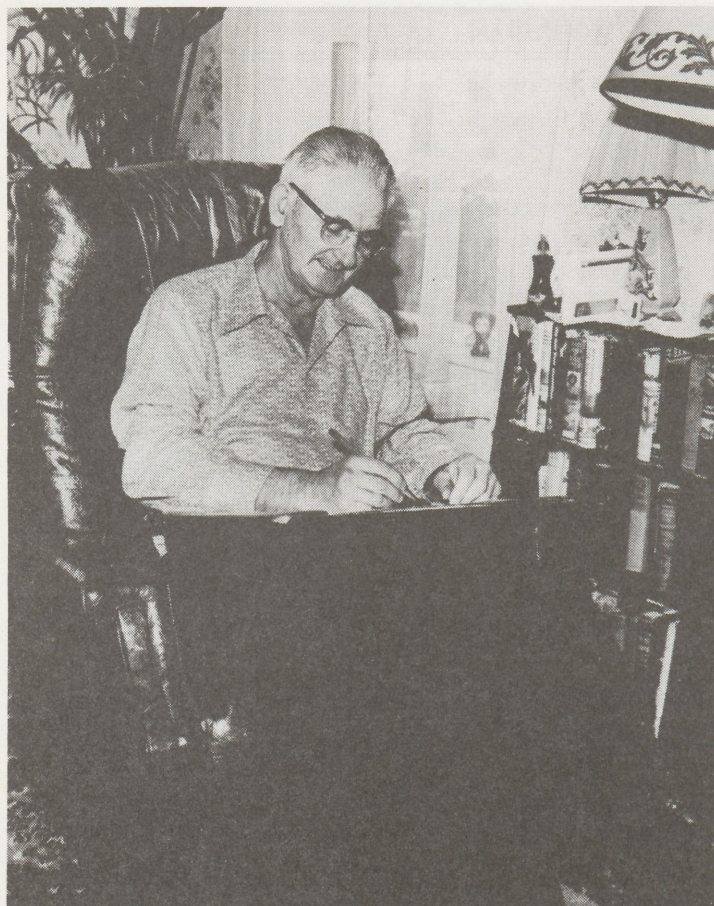
The bylaw could also be an educational tool, a way to show property owners that historic buildings can be adapted for use in today's world. An example of an adaptation in the making is the 19th-century Leonard House, which was recently moved to the Pratt Farm, where it will be the headquarters for the town-owned conservation area and the offices of the Conser-

vation Commission and Historical Commission. This house, which was the subject of a May, 1989 Antiquarian article, is believed to have been a stage coach stop on the New Bedford-Boston turnpike in the 1800s. It was to have been demolished to make way for an industrial park at the Rotary, but was spared at the request of local preservationists. It is a long way from being restored to its original condition, but someday the Leonard House will serve the community and the many townspeople who visit the Pratt Farm.

The demolition delay bylaw has, admittedly, been rejected twice by town meeting voters. The historical commission believes this occurred because voters did not understand the bylaw and its implications. As a result, commissioners have been working to educate voters about the bylaw; a cable television program will be shown prior to town meeting, and copies of the bylaw will be available as well.

This bylaw is an important preservation tool, and is also an integral part of the overall preservation plan for the town.

(Mrs. Lopes, the editor of the Antiquarian, is also chairman of the Middleboro Historical Commission and the Leonard House Committee.)



LYMAN BUTLER, author of The Middleboro Gazette's popular "Down Memory Lane" column, is also a former officer of the Middleborough Historical Association.

Lyman Butler — We thank you!

by Robert M. Beals

One of the first columns that I read in the Middleborough Gazette was Lyman Butler's "Down Memory Lane." For those of us who are senior citizens, his words bring back many fond memories of "how life was back then."

Lyman has always been a great and true friend of the Middleborough Historical Association. For several years, he served as a director, vice-president and president of the association. He visited the museum frequently and loved to do little odd jobs around the buildings and grounds. He kept the bushes and hedges trimmed every summer.

Today, Lyman is a resident of the Oak Hill Nursing Home. He loves to have visitors and talk over old times. I spent a few minutes with him recently while he was working on a column for the Gazette.

The Middleborough Historical Association is grateful to this fine man for his many years of devoted service to the community and the association.

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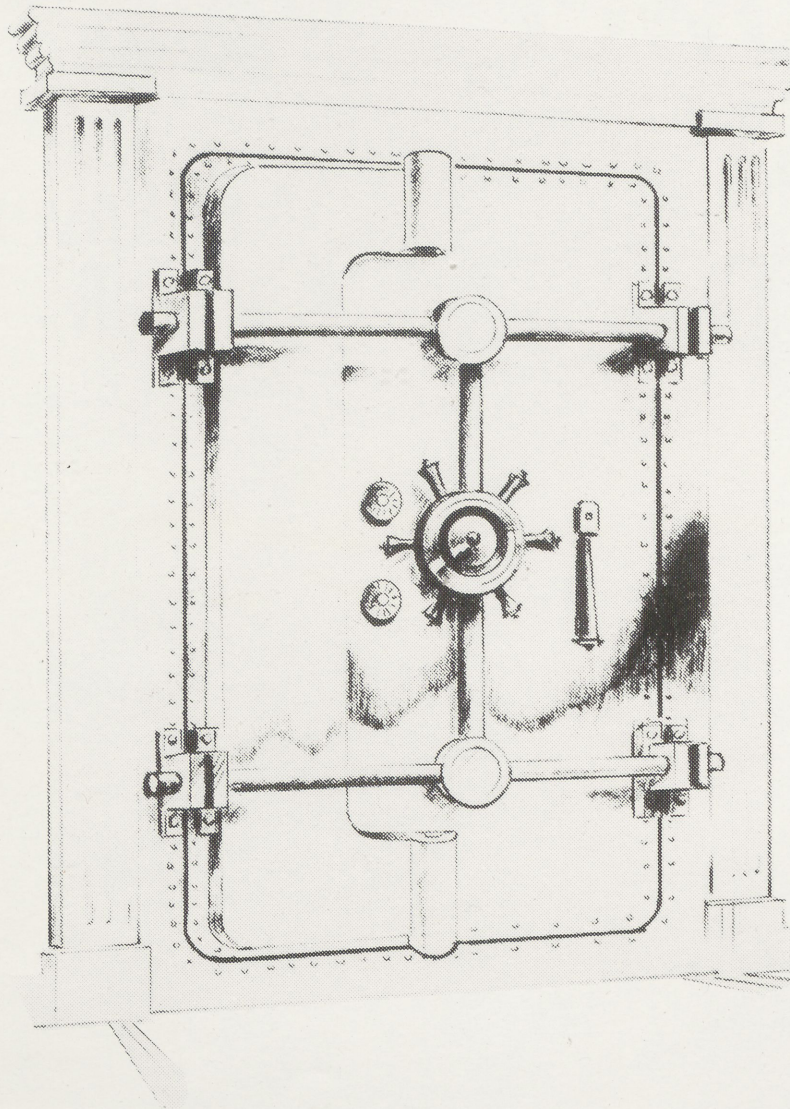
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